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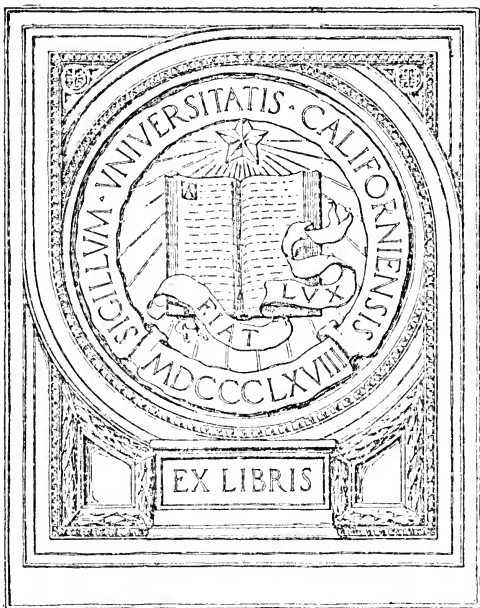
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In Yosemite and Other Poems

BY HENRY MEADE BLAND

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"There glooms El Capitan, and o'er and o'er
Recounts his thunder-scars. Be silent and adore!"

Short Story Quarterly

SUMMER NUMBER 1920

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And in the tumult of the sea.
The same in microbe of the slime,
And in the master poet's rhyme!
The same in fire of the dawn,
And genius of Napoleon;
The same in rootlet of the sod
And in the cherubim of God!

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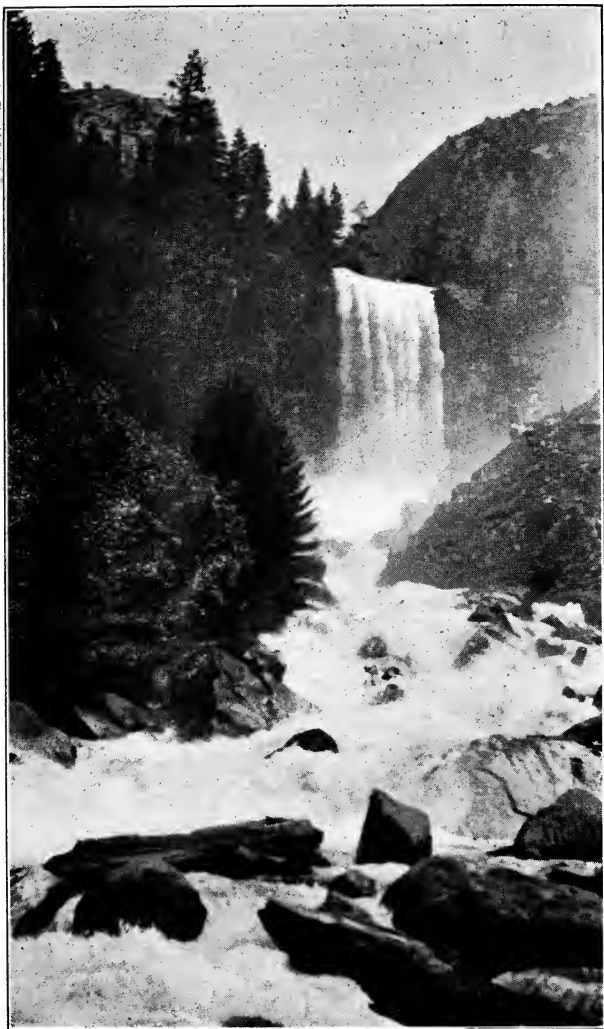
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SHORT STORY QUARTERLY

IN YOSEMITE*

Because there is a rosy memory
Of stream and flower and a face divine
Woven with high crag and lilled lea,
I, Inno, Child of the Dawn and the White Sunshine,
Write these soft rhymes and dare to call them mine.
Now in sweet fancy am I again a boy,
And lose myself among the ancient pine,
Climbing the highest cliff in silent joy,
Lorn as lorn Paris driven by Fate from song-built Troy.

Sweet saintly sister of the golden prime,
Who walked the high Sierran vale with me,
Well I remember in that starry time,
What wonder gleamed from stream and flower and tree!
How sang the winds in witching revelry,
Wild as by nature-worshiper e'er heard!
And merry was your happy company,
That breathed itself in many a quiet word
Like the low lilting song of some swift homing bird!

How can I read the glacier chronicle,
Of heaped moraine, or rock-wall scarred and seamed:
Its story seems to fall sardonical
Upon the yearning soul that once has dreamed
On labyrinthine mind or once has deemed
Perfection has been found within a face,
And all the magic of that face is reamed
Into his brain, woven in immortal grace,
Whose beauty only an eternal love can trace.

Clear as a star reflected in the deep
Of silent Mirror Lake, that face to me!
No breath of air breaks in upon the sleep
Of jewelled water, shining radiantly:
Thus in that quiet lake of memory
(As in that silver pool) upon the star
I look with eager wondering eye and see
The meteor-flash of beauty from afar;
And fain would turn the key, the sacred past unbar.

I walk in silence by the mossed stream,
The ousel sings, the summer clouds are high,
My mind runs only to a single theme—
A magic face that ever flashes nigh.
I gaze the long prospect to the tender sky:
Lo, it is there, and ever seems to rise.
Then comes the gray dove's plaintive loving cry
Only to be broken by a sweet surprise;—
Through the dark fir leaves gleam those eager talking eyes

Too many memories ensnare the heart,
And seem to hold me from the days to be.
Farewell, O time, of which I was a part.
I turn in rapture unto the flowered lea!
The joyous thrush is rhyming now for me,
The waterfall sings all the summer hour.
Make me, O Crag, of thine eternity!
Give me, O Vale, the glory of thy dower!
Touch me, I pray, with thy great majesty and power!

How witching now to linger on the trail,
A-list for the first night-melody of Pan
Floating afar from shadowy rock and dale!
How wild the revel of the joyous clan,
Of fairy and nymph, a merry caravan,
Hurrying at eve from tree or leafy bower;
Or, when the new moon leads the starry van,
How tragic-deep the voices, hour by hour,
Boomed by the thundrous fall in majesty and power.

Perhaps the Master-Mind has subtly given
This, the great glory of the primal world,
Scarred with old time and with the thunder riven,
Where by His foot the stream of streams lies curled;
That, turning thence to where in power is whirled
The wheel by which He shapes the soul of man,
One may adore the flash divine unfurled
Upon the brow of smiling child, or span
The way unfolding life's inexplicable plan.

Those springs that sparkle like the Pleiads seven;
Those spires and towers that reach unto the skies;
Those winding trails, like paths high unto heaven;
Those winds that sing the songs of Paradise;
That storm that shouts and roars, or wails and sighs;
Those streams that leap and dash and wind and wind;
That cataract whose glory never dies!—
Is not this wonder infinite and designed
To be the emblem eternal of the Immortal Mind!

All the sweet harmonies of Eden-Time
Are here. The Winds in summer melody
The water-ousel song; the rippled rhyme
Of snowy waters, and the minstrelsy
Of immemorial pine. Such harmony
Greek Homer played; on such a steep he sang
When that he fashioned white and joyously
The throne of Jove: for, as his music rang.
Straightway the temple of the gods in glory sprang.

Once on the trail I stood while sombre clouds
Loomed threat'ningly around the Valley rim,
Swaying in ominous, shadowy, angry crowds—
Dark offspring of the summery seraphim,—
Who sang a deep, titanic, snow-born hymn;
Then came the thunder, not a single crash,
But like the shout of hosting cherubim:
The day was night, and fiercely lash on lash,
Wild dome and spire signaled many a fiery flash.

There gleams the rainbow over Vernal Fall,
There glows the great Nevada, haloed white,
And haughty Half Dome lifts his granite wall
Where bold Tenaya flashes mystic light.
The clear Mercedes wings in gentle flight
Where the Great Fall is singing evermore!
The Bridal Maiden laughs, a radiant sprite.
There glooms El Capitan, and o'er and o'er
Recounts his thunder-scars. Be silent and adore!

A hundred thousand years of mountain bloom!—
The tall Oenotheras, the mimulus, the blue
Pentstamon, fabric woven in the loom
Of April; violets dipped in sunlit dew,
Lilies and daisies and all the lightsome crew
Of poppy and heartsease for which lovers yearn,
New form their fragrance and their gallant hue.
Snowdrop, Azalea, and the rose eterne,
And all the fine embroidery of leaf and fern!

In such a vale beloved Endymion
Reclined when Adonais secret-dwelt
Within his bower deep-hidden from the sun;
Where twilight mysteries forever melt
Into the starlight, and through the night are felt
Strange presences unseen. In such a vale
The star-crowned Bard of shining Avon dealt
With Fate, creating ghost or phantom pale
Telling of love and war in many a sweet-sung tale.

The great Earth-Mother carved, long, long ago,
And fretted these high crags, and gently drew
Her finger in the sand. She taught the snow
The way of the stream. She hung the rose with dew.
She hollowed out the caves, and tuned anew
The hills to low Aeolian refrain:
She gave the sky its deep eternal blue:
She changed the snow to singing summer rain;
And trailed the ancient hills, an endless golden chain.

Here lorn Niam, the Oread of the Wind,
Waits by the shadowy river's flowered stream,
Moaning and sighing because she cannot find
Her lover. She waits where gleam on gleam
The lightning flashes in a joy supreme,
Till longing sweet o'er-fills her eyes of blue,—
Waits the old tryst upon the hills of Dream,
Her loved Caolte promised to renew,
And now she spreads her couch in many a sunlit hue.

And here star-eyed Idalean Venus rose,
Bewitching messenger from gods to men.
Greek Hermes, so the Attic story goes,
Averred she was born of foam: clear to his ken
He saw her spring fairer than poet's pen
Ever set forth. He erred. The magic One,
Sweet Love, leapt from the glorious rainbow when
The great Fall was wed unto the noonday Sun,
Fairest of all beauty great Poesy has spun.

Here on a flowery day came John o' the Mountain,
And shaped he many a far and deep-hid trail.
He saw with loving eye each stream and fountain
And sought each secret of the rain-bowed vale;
Until the white-winged angel, Israefale,
Touched him and beckoned, and gently upward led
Him over the Range of Light; and now his tale
Is told in flower and stream and sunset red,
And every tree the wilding folk have tenanted.

And I, too, came and saw, and loved; and listened
To the divine song of cataract and air;
Gazed where the starry domes in wonder glistened:
Where the high towering fir were ever fair;
Dreamed by the river, watched with tender care
The robin build, and many a happy hour,
Trailed through the meadow where the debonair
Sunshiny blossoms made a witching bower,
Fashioned of buttercups the happy children's dower.

All the long summer afternoon me-seemed
To have been borne unto that Aiden-Land,
Where sweet the smiling leaves of lotus dreamed,
The spiced pine soothed with many a fragrant hand,
The happy brook laughed over the silver sand;
Only by Pan's wild flutes was the silence broken
While rosy Iris arched her flashing band.
Love drank libations from his chalice oaken
And a new friendship smiled with many a happy token.

The rainbow fades upon the purple hill,
But in the soul its glories never die;
A smile may pass as ripples on a rill,
But in true hearts its circles ever lie:
The gold that passes from the morning sky,
Is gold forever in great Memory's reign:
Psyche is ever a tenant in love's sigh,
And gentle Baldur, by blind Hoder slain,
Is deathless in spring's never-ending flower-train.

SIERRAN PAN.

I am fire and dew and sunshine,
I am mist on the foamy wave,
I'm the rippling note from the field-lark's throat,
I'm the jewel hid in the cave.

I'm the lightning flash on the mountain,
And the cold rose-red of the dawn,
I'm the odor of pine and purple vine,
And the willowy leap of the fawn.

I'm the sigh of the south wind of autumn,
I'm the scent of the earth at first rain,
I'm the wild honker call of the earliest fall,
I'm the yellow of ripening grain.

I'm the music no singer has dreamed of,
I'm joy in the heart of man;
I'm the lyric time of no poet's rhyme,
I'm the glad, the immortal Pan.

THE POPPY.

The first to lift its golden head
After the autumn shower;
The last to doff its summer red,—
A fragile, wind-blown flower.

SEPTEMBER.

A twitter of wrens, a rustle of leaves,
How sweet 'tis to remember!
Such is the magic nature weaves
When it is mild September.

A gossamer on the gentle wind,
White as the snow of December,
Bright as a spirit unconfined;
And it is mild September.

A honker call from the clear blue sky,
Prophetic of November.
'Tis answered by the flock's high cry—
Yes, it is mild September.

A zephyry odor from the pine,
Light as a flashing ember;
A lark song with a lilt divine—
Oh, it is mild September!

MISUNDERSTOOD.

I sailed away
In thought one day
Out where a mighty squadron lay;
But the sailors laughed
And took my craft,
And broke my spar in play.
Out and afar
O'er the storm-beat bar
That squadron sailed;
But never a tar
Came from that sea
But one, and he
Came tied to my broken spar.

THE MAN OF THE TRAIL.

A spirit that pulses forever,
Like the fiery heart of a boy;
A forehead that lifts to the sunlight,
And is wreathed forever in joy;
A muscle that holds like the iron,
That binds-in the prisoner, steam;
Lo! these are the Trailman's glory;
Lo! these are the Trailman's dream!

An eye that catches the radiance
That gleams from mountain and sky;
And an ear that awakes to the music
Of the storm as it surges on high;
A sense that garners the splendor
Of sun, moon or starry gleam;
Yea, these are the Trailman's glory;
Yea, these are the Trailman's dream!

The wild high climb, o'er the mountain;
The lodge by the river's brim;
The glance at the fierce cloud-horses,
As they plunge over the range's rim;
The juniper's balm for the nostrils,
The dash in the whitening stream;
Lo! these are the Trailman's glory;
Lo! these are the Trailman's dream!

The ride down the wild river-canyon,
Where the wild oats grow breast-high;
The shout of the quail on the hillside;
The turtle dove flashing by;
An eve round the fragrant fire,
And the tales of heroic theme;
Yea, these are the Trailman's glory;
Yea, these are the Trailman's dream!

THE WIND AMONG THE EAVES.

'Tis the deep of autumn twilight,
And I sit beside the fire,
Watching how, like yearning spirits,
Reddening flames rise high and higher:
Then I catch the first faint singing,
That the magic twilight weaves,
And sit spell-bound by the music
Of the wind around the eaves.

O that vagrant soulful runeing,
Like a song that floats from far
O'er soft wavy summer waters
That reflect the evening star!
Is there ever any message
That the heart or soul receives
Like this dithyrambic haunting
Of the wind around the eaves?

Druid with his burning lyre,
Pan's sweet measure on his flute,
Hebrew wrapt in endless yearning,
Poet with his deathless lute—
All of these and more enchanting!
Who is he that e'er conceives
Half this melody ecstatic
Of the wind around the eaves

Chirp of cricket in the meadow,
Moan of dove or hum of bee,
Croon of crane in mild September,
Voice of one loved tenderly,
Lyric lilt or epic sorrow;
Heart that triumphs, soul that grieves—
All are one in this wild paeon
Of the wind around the eaves!

THE NORTH WIND.

I come from far,
 By the northern star,
 Where the cold white silence lies;
Where the wild waves war
On the Yukon bar,
 And the drear, cold icebergs rise.

To the ocean caves
I roll great waves,
 As I wheel down the rock-bound coast;
And the weird cliff raves,
As the seaman braves
 The angry scream of my host.

On the pulsing tide
I ride and ride,
 Till the mad waves leap and run;
Nor is staid my stride
Till my legions abide
 In the isles of the tropic sun.

I moan and wail
In the tattered sail
 Of the helmless sea-worn bark;
And my wild fierce gale
Leaves never a trail
 Of the keel I swirl in the dark.

I was strong and young
When the years first flung
 The groves of Eden in bloom;
And the paeans sung
By my brazen tongue
 Shall chant till the hour of doom.

HUNTING SONG.

When thee sweet south wind comes singing
Through the shining oak-tree leaves,
And the white wild goose comes winging,
And the winds cry at the eaves:

When the mallard's wing at moon-rise
Whistles through the deepening blue,
And you hear the crane's low croon rise,
I'll be coming home to you.

When you light the autumn fire,
And the flames dance on the floor;
And the sparks climb high and higher
As white souls climb evermore,

If the runeing of the cricket
Makes you tingle through and through,
Then you'll know the swing of the wicket,
For I'm coming home to you.

THE END OF SUMMER.

Sweep on, O tide, across the yellow sands,
And rock the birds, and flash the autumn moon!
No more the long unbroken summer dream,
The days are gone, and, oh, too soon!

And thou, O wave, upon the distant crag
Break thy wild heart from dawn to golden dawn!
No more will I the rolling billows ride.
The oar is lost, the rudder gone!

And thou, my most beloved, who changest not
Line foamy tide or briny summer wind;
I have a realm I consecrate to thee,
An inland of contented mind!

THE CONDOR.

He sits upon his watch-tower,—yonder peak,—
And gazes as the autumn sun goes down;
And I, too, on my somber hill await
The sun to rim the far-off mountain crown.

His wings are now aslant as if to sail
Into the light he gazes at so fond
And well I know he only holds his flight
Till the last fire dips the gulf beyond.

And as he, when his golden sun is gone,
Wheels and is off upon a flight unknown
So when my light sinks to the sapphire hill
Shall I my sure flight wing unto mine own.

LOVE'S PURPOSE.

Love brings the blush into the fair wild rose;
And paints the white upon the heron's plume,
And flings into wild dream the prophet's prose;
And points the starry lights in midnight gloom.

Love sends the gleam into the infant's eye;
And makes the rustle in the bladed corn,
Instills the sweetness in the lover's sigh,
Flashes the red into the whitening morn.

And if love did not with her shining wand
Entrance the sea and earth and wondrous sky,
Chaos would break his old restraining bond;
And earth would crumble and the stars would die.

THE DIVINE IN NATURE.

On Shasta's brow the thunder sleeps;
But, with the lightning's blazing rod,
That burns o'er Lassen's fiery steeps,
A voice comes from the mountain deeps:
"Be still and know that I am God!"

O'er Yuba's plain the North wind raves,
And withers herb and blackens sod;
But, in the wild lake's roaring waves,
Is heard as from a thousand caves:
"Be still and know that I am God!"

SUNRISE OVER THE SIERRAS.

I mind me how one day-break long ago,
I heard the wild swan play his magic horn;
Heard the cold north wind blow his pipe forlorn;
Heard the sweet stream purl gently to and fro
In oaten meadows; while the lyric flow
Of field-lark hymn called to the splendid morn
Until the sun, a light divine, new-born,
Lifted—a wild flash over the virgin snow.

Then stood I like the holy orient priest,
Who gave unto the fire a sacred name,
And ever burned his altar in the East;
Or like the rapturous poet-king who came
At morn, as to a pentactostal feast,
And saw Jehovah in the Rising Flame!

THE BLUE-BELL.

You ask, why for the rose I have no care,
Why choose I not to wear
The lily fair?
My flower, you say,
Is dull and grey,
And common everywhere. I answer: "Tis not
perfume rare,
Nor pollen-burst, nor petal-glare,
To which my faith I truly swear;
But to this weedy wind-blown tare:
Because, once in the garden there,
My own true love
A chaplet wove
Of it, and garlanded her hair."

THE MEADOW-LARK.

Sweet Pan one time toiled all the morning long
To bring forth from an oat a merry song.
At last it came and, on her willowy bough,
A field lark caught and treasured it till now.

JUNE.

Green of the earth, blue of the sky,
Flash of the stream as it ripples by!
Bud of the flower, song of the bird,—
How can one think an unhappy word

Smile of the child, joy of the youth,
Revel of both in the sunshine of Truth;
Stir of the wind and hum of the bee,—
Goes it not all to the heart of me?

Faith of the woman, strength of the man;
Flash of the rain, and the rainbow span!
Joy is out in the world at play,—
Is it not good, this new June day?

IN A SIERRA FOREST.

Here elfin songs are sung forevermore,
Waking sweet echoes of the pipes of Pan.
Here dance the nymphs to music sweeter than
The strains that ever blew from Lesbian shore.
Here, too, Apollo plays his rhythmic o'er
And shapes a temple for the soul of man.
Here we may lift our brightening eyes and scan
The magic regions never known before.

Here Morn comes glorying from her snowy portal
And rims the mountains with her fire immortal.
Here Noon lilts melodies forever new,
And burns her incense over wilds of blue;
And Eve with kindnesses that never fail
Croons gently, and recounts a lover's tale.

ON THE LIFE-TRAIL.

I only keep a-climbing.
I know the stars of God are overhead;
And by yon far-off gleaming spirit-wand,
'The meteor's gleam, I know that I am led;
And so I keep a-climbing.

I only keep a-climbing.
It may be yon blue range will be the last;
It may be many others loom beyond;
And yet I know the summit will be passed,
And so I keep a-climbing.

ELEMENTAL BEAUTY.

Yea, evermore I feel myself in love
With elemental things; the reddening rose;
The flowing stream; the wind that gently blows
O'er meadows oaten; the note of mating dove;
The woodland sweet with blossoms interwove;
The field-lark singing in the willow-close;
And every bud that in the garden grows:
The star eternal orb'd in blue above!

And oh, this love for beauty in the field,
This wonder-love for elemental things!
Lo, as I muse on earth, and sky, and sea,
I am as one who stands with soul revealed—
A lyric bard, who, high-exalting, sings,
Unto the World-Heart throbbing deathlessly!

A SONG OF JOY.

Joy! Joy! Infinite joy
Wild as the fire in the heart of a boy;
Clean as the soul of the laughing breeze;
Pure as the heart of the dryad trees!

The sky is mine, the earth is mine,
The air and the sea and all that is;
But when I shall pass I shall walk divine
In ways more starry fair than this!

I say I have lived in a joyous world
Where every loving dream comes true;
With comfort and plenty around me curled,
Where every moment is fresh and new.

It's great—this life on the hills of Time,—
To follow the gleam, and still endure,
To strive in joy for the High Sublime,
And know that the way of love is sure.

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CALIFORNIA

A DAY ON SUMMER SEAS.

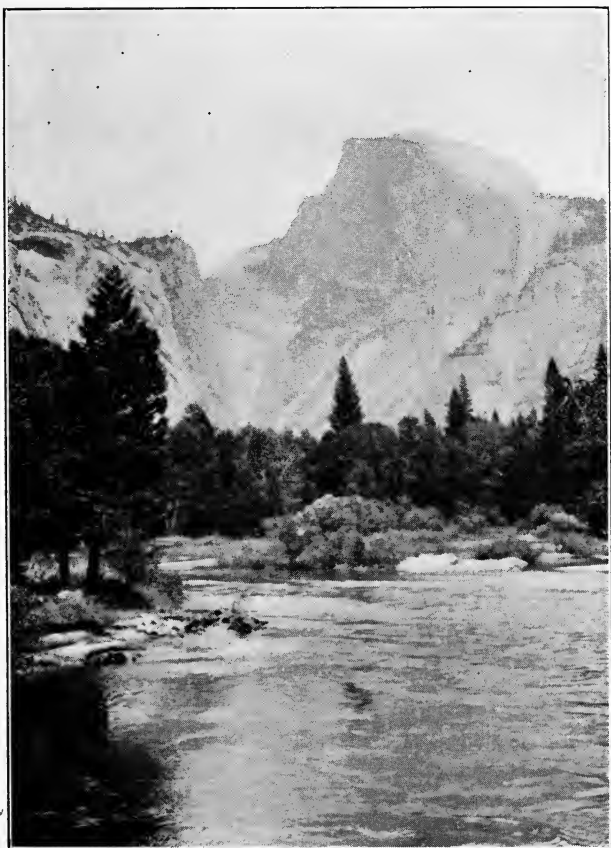
The sunrise-flash and the sky-flame;
The blue sea calm as the stars;
The long strong pull at the oar-locks;
And the gull on the white sand-bars!
The morn is a rose-red ruby;
An orient sapphire the sea!
Yes, these are the treasures I'm after,
And this is the booty for me!

I hear the crash of the breaker;
And the song of the wild bell-buoy;
And the lyric sweep of the sea-wind,
As it sings of the new-coming joy!
Comes ozone from magical islands
Afloat on the morning breeze—
Was there ever a Circean bower
Bore perfumes enchanted as these?

The white sail-flash in the sunshine;
The swish of the long salmon-line;
The fisherman tense at the gunwhale;
The bark rich with spoil from the brine!
The sea-rover proud of his capture,
And preening his sail for home-flight;
And, swifter than thought, for his loved ones
He flies as with wings of light!

The race to the mild, sheltered haven
With the fresh gale swinging behind;
The gossamer-white of the foam-wreath
The song of the sails in the wind;
A soul that is lighter than rock-spray
Back from its wonderful quest,
And lost in the mystical dream-world,
Of the great unmatchable West!

The kindly light in the faces
That watch when the day is done;
The friendly smile of the comrades,
And the twilight of love has begun!
The rest in the vine-covered arbor,
With a vision of days to be:
And one more gentle adventure
Is gone as the foam of the sea!



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Doer of wild deeds, singer of wilder songs,
He was of them to whom unrest belongs.

No desert pass, or sky-born mountain rim,
But had an ever-changing trail for him!

Wherever life was young and fresh and bold
'There was his way; wherever life was old,

And touched with dusty age, that deeply peered
Into the past, thither his footstep veered.

He drank life deep in wood-grown Oregon,
And where white Shasta gleams, a rising sun.

From where Willamette wears her diadem
Of camas e'en to far Jerusalem,

The unforgotten, to the untracked plain
Of Amazon, unto Alaska's chain

Of golden hills he journeyed, then afar
Where shines Luzon, a gleaming orient star;

Then on the ocean's wild and flying foam,
Until he loitered in the heart of Rome—

Yet but a moment; driven by fate purblind
Homed with the Aztec, then in peace divined

A lodge where he in quiet might abide
By that calm bay where the world's navies ride,

Where the low hills, in fold on emerald fold
Look out forever on a Gate of Gold,

Great son of the lyric, happy, primal West,
He gave the world whate'er was in him best,—

The vital things of which he was a part,—
His book, his love, his soul, his earnest heart,

Scattering his joy in flowers, in trees, in rills,
He wove his spirit in these gentle hills.



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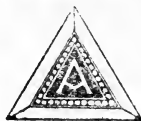
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